

What is claimed is:

1. An information providing apparatus comprising:

first reception control means for controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

first transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

second reception control means for controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof supplied from said second information processing apparatus;

storage control means for controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correlation with said user identification data;

third reception control means for controlling the reception of said user identification data and a request for sending said content supplied from said first information processing apparatus; and

second transmission control means for controlling, in response to said request for sending said content, the

transmission of said content stored in correlation with said user identification data.

2. The information providing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said third reception control means controls the reception of said request for sending said content as a request for checking out said content and said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content.

3. The information providing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content to said first information processing apparatus.

4. The information providing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content to said first information processing apparatus.

5. The information providing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content to a recording medium detachably loaded in said first information processing apparatus.

6. The information providing apparatus according

to claim 5, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content to said recording medium.

7. An information providing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof supplied from said second information processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correlation with said user identification data;

controlling the reception of said user identification data and a request for sending said content supplied from said first information processing apparatus; and

controlling, in response to said request for

sending said content, the transmission of said content stored in correlation with said user identification data.

8. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof supplied from said second information processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correlation with said user identification data;

controlling the reception of said user identification data and a request for sending said content supplied from said first information processing apparatus; and

controlling, in response to said request for sending said content, the transmission of said content

stored in correlation with said user identification data.

9. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof supplied from said second information processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correlation with said user identification data;

controlling the reception of said user identification data and a request for sending said content supplied from said first information processing apparatus; and

controlling, in response to said request for sending said content, the transmission of said content stored in correlation with said user identification data.

10. An information processing apparatus comprising:

first transmission control means for controlling the transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content;

second transmission control means for controlling the transmission, to said first information providing apparatus, of a request for said content recorded in said first information providing apparatus in correlation with said user identification data; and

reception control means for controlling the reception of said content supplied from said first information providing apparatus.

11. The information processing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said request for said content as a request for checking out said content and said reception control means controls the reception of the checked out content.

12. The information processing apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

storage control means for controlling the storing of the received content into an incorporated storage medium.

13. The information processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said storage control means controls the storing of said content checked out to said incorporated storage medium.

14. The information processing apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

storage control means for controlling the storing of the received content into a detachably loaded storage medium.

15. The information processing apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said storage control means controls the storing of the checked out content into said detachably loaded storage medium.

16. An information processing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a

content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content;

controlling the transmission, to said first information providing apparatus, of a request for said content recorded in said first information providing apparatus in correlation with said user identification data; and

controlling the reception of said content supplied from said first information providing apparatus.

17. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content;

controlling the transmission, to said first information providing apparatus, of a request for said content recorded in said first information providing apparatus in correlation with said user identification data; and

controlling the reception of said content supplied from said first information providing apparatus.

18. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content;

controlling the transmission, to said first information providing apparatus, of a request for said content recorded in said first information providing apparatus in correlation with said user identification data; and

controlling the reception of said content supplied from said first information providing apparatus.

19. An information providing apparatus comprising:

first reception control means for controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

first transmission control means for controlling, in response to said request for purchasing said content, the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

second reception control means for controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof sent from said second information processing apparatus;

storage control means for controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with said user identification data; and

second transmission control means for controlling, if said content has been stored, the execution of the transmission of said content stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

20. The information providing apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content.

21. The information providing apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content to said first information processing apparatus.

22. The information providing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said second transmission control

means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content to said first information processing apparatus.

23. The information providing apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content to a storage medium which is detachably loaded in said first information processing apparatus.

24. The information providing apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content to said storage medium.

25. An information providing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling, in response to said request for purchasing said content, the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof sent from said second information

processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling, if said content has been stored, the execution of the transmission of said content stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

26. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling, in response to said request for purchasing said content, the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof sent from said second information processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling, if said content has been stored, the

execution of the transmission of said content stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

27. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling, in response to said request for purchasing said content, the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content and usage conditions thereof sent from said second information processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said content and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling, if said content has been stored, the execution of the transmission of said content stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

28. An information processing apparatus comprising:

transmission control means for controlling the

transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content; and

reception control means for controlling, if said first information providing apparatus has recorded the purchased content, the reception of said content to be sent by said first information providing apparatus.

29. The information processing apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said reception control means controls the reception of the checked out content.

30. The information processing apparatus according to claim 28, further comprising:

storage control means for controlling the storing of the received content into an incorporated storage medium.

31. The information processing apparatus according to claim 30 wherein said storage control means controls the storing of the checked out content into said incorporated storage medium.

32. The information processing apparatus according

to claim 28, further comprising:

storage control means for controlling the storing of the received content into a detachably loaded storage medium.

33. The information processing apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said storage control means controls the storing of the checked out content into said detachably loaded storage medium.

34. An information processing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content; and

controlling, if said first information providing apparatus has recorded the purchased content, the reception of said content to be sent by said first information providing apparatus.

35. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to a first

information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content; and controlling, if said first information providing apparatus has recorded the purchased content, the reception of said content to be sent by said first information providing apparatus.

36. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to a first information providing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content to make said first information providing apparatus purchase said content from a second information providing apparatus and record the purchased content; and controlling, if said first information providing apparatus has recorded the purchased content, the reception of said content to be sent by said first information providing apparatus.

37. An information providing apparatus comprising:

storage control means for controlling the storing of a first content, a second content, and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with user identification data for identifying a user of an information processing apparatus;

reception control means for controlling the reception of a request for checking in of said first content and a request for checking out of said second content along with said user identification data sent from said information processing apparatus;

check-in control means for controlling, in response to the check-in request, the checking in of said first content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data; and

check-out control means for controlling, in response to the check-out request when the checking in of said first content has ended, the checking out of said second content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

38. The information providing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein said check-in control means controls the checking in of said first content sent from said information processing apparatus.

39. The information providing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein said check-in control means controls the checking in of said first content from a storage medium detachably loaded in said information processing apparatus.

40. The information providing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein said check-out control means controls the checking out of said second content to said information processing apparatus.

41. The information providing apparatus according to claim 37, wherein said check-out control means controls the checking out of said second content to a recording medium detachably loaded in said information processing apparatus.

42. An information providing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the storing of a first content, a second content, and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with user identification data for identifying a user of an information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of a request for checking in of said first content and a request for checking out of said second content along with said user

identification data sent from said information processing apparatus;

controlling, in response to the check-in request, the checking in of said first content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling, in response to the check-out request if the checking in of said first content has ended, the checking out of said second content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

43. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the storing of a first content, a second content, and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with user identification data for identifying a user of an information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of a request for checking in of said first content and a request for checking out of said second content along with said user identification data sent from said information processing apparatus;

controlling, in response to the check-in request,

the checking in of said first content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling, in response to the check-out request if the checking in of said first content has ended, the checking out of said second content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

44. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the storing of a first content, a second content, and usage conditions thereof in correspondence with user identification data for identifying a user of an information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of a request for checking in of said first content and a request for checking out of said second content along with said user identification data sent from said information processing apparatus;

controlling, in response to the check-in request, the checking in of said first content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling, in response to the check-out request if the checking in of said first content has ended, the checking out of said second content on the basis of said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data.

45. An information processing apparatus comprising:

transmission control means for controlling the transmission, to an information providing apparatus, of a request for checking in of a first content and a request for checking out of a second content;

check-in control means for controlling checking in of said first content on the basis of controlling by said information providing apparatus; and

check-out control means for controlling checking out of said second content supplied from said information providing apparatus when checking in of said first content has ended.

46. The information processing apparatus according to claim 45, wherein said check-in control means controls checking in of said first content read from an incorporated storage medium.

47. The information processing apparatus according to claim 45, wherein said check-in control means controls

checking in of said first content read from a detachably loaded storage medium.

controlling the transmission, to an information providing apparatus, of a request for checking in of a first content and a request for checking out of a second content;

controlling checking in of said first content on the basis of controlling by said information providing apparatus; and

controlling checking out of said second content
supplied from said information providing apparatus when
checking in of said first content has ended.

52. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the transmission, to an information providing apparatus, of a request for checking in of a first content and a request for checking out of a second content;

controlling checking in of said first content on the basis of controlling by said information providing apparatus; and

controlling checking out of said second content
supplied from said information providing apparatus when
checking in of said first content has ended.

53. An information providing apparatus comprising:
first reception control means for controlling the

reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

first transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

second reception control means for controlling the reception, from said second information processing apparatus, device identification information for identifying said second information processing apparatus and usage conditions of said content;

storage control means for controlling the storing of said device identification information and said usage conditions in correspondence with said user identification data; and

second transmission control means for controlling in response to a request from said first information processing apparatus said device identification information and said usage conditions recorded in correspondence with said user identification data to said first information processing apparatus.

54. An information providing method comprising the

steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

for controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception, from said second information processing apparatus, device identification information for identifying said second information processing apparatus and usage conditions of said content;

controlling the storing of said device identification information and said usage conditions in correspondence with said user identification data; and

controlling in response to a request from said first information processing apparatus said device identification information and said usage conditions recorded in correspondence with said user identification data to said first information processing apparatus.

55. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

processing apparatus, of user identification data for identifying a user of said first information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to a second information processing apparatus;

controlling the storing of said device
identification information and said usage conditions in
correspondence with said user identification data; and

57. An information processing apparatus
comprising:

identifying an information providing apparatus for providing a content and usage conditions of said content;

transmission control means for controlling, if the reproduction of said content is requested, the transmission of the request of said content to said information providing apparatus on the basis of said device identification information and said usage conditions; and

second reception control means for controlling the reception of said content from said information providing apparatus.

58. The information processing apparatus according to claim 57, wherein said second reception control means controls the reception from said information providing apparatus said content having a format corresponding to streaming reproduction.

59. An information processing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception of device identification information for identifying an information providing apparatus for providing a content and usage conditions of said content;

controlling, if the reproduction of said content is requested, the transmission of the request of said

content to said information providing apparatus on the basis of said device identification information and said usage conditions; and

controlling the reception of said content from said information providing apparatus.

60. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception of device identification information for identifying an information providing apparatus for providing a content and usage conditions of said content;

controlling, if the reproduction of said content is requested, the transmission of the request of said content to said information providing apparatus on the basis of said device identification information and said usage conditions; and

controlling the reception of said content sent from said information providing apparatus.

61. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the reception of device identification information for identifying an information providing apparatus for providing a content and usage conditions of said content;

controlling, if the reproduction of said content is requested, the transmission of the request of said content to said information providing apparatus on the basis of said device identification information and said usage conditions; and

controlling the reception of said content from said information providing apparatus.

62. An information providing apparatus comprising:

first reception control means for controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of a request for purchasing a content;

first transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of device identification information for identifying said information providing apparatus and usage conditions of said content to said first information processing apparatus;

second reception control means for controlling the reception of a request for said content from a second information processing apparatus; and

second transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for said content the transmission of said content to said second information processing apparatus.

63. The information providing apparatus according to claim 62, wherein said second transmission control means controls the transmission, to said second information processing apparatus, of said content having a format corresponding to streaming reproduction.

64. An information providing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of device identification information for identifying said information providing apparatus and usage conditions of said content to said first information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of a request for said content from a second information processing apparatus; and

controlling in response to said request for said content the transmission of said content to said second information processing apparatus.

65. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of device identification information for identifying said information providing apparatus and usage conditions of said content to said first information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of a request for said content from a second information processing apparatus; and

controlling in response to said request for said content the transmission of said content to said second information processing apparatus.

66. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the reception, from a first information processing apparatus, of a request for purchasing a content;

controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of device identification information for identifying said information providing apparatus and usage conditions of

said content to said first information processing apparatus;

controlling the reception of a request for said content from a second information processing apparatus; and

controlling in response to said request for said content the transmission of said content to said second information processing apparatus.

67. An information providing system including a first information providing apparatus, an information processing apparatus, and a second information providing apparatus,

said first information providing apparatus comprising:

first reception control means for controlling the reception, from said information processing apparatus, user identification data for identifying a user of said information processing apparatus and a request for purchasing a content;

first transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said request for purchasing said content to said second information providing apparatus;

second reception control means for controlling the

reception, from said second information providing apparatus, device identification information for identifying said second information providing apparatus and usage conditions of said content;

storage control means for controlling the storing of said device identification information and said usage conditions in correspondence with said user identification data; and

second transmission control means for controlling in response to a request from said information processing apparatus the transmission, to said information processing apparatus, said device identification information and said usage conditions stored in correspondence with said user identification data;

said information processing apparatus comprising:

third reception control means for controlling the reception of said device identification information and said usage conditions;

third transmission control means for controlling, when reproduction of said content is requested, the transmission of the request for said content to said second information providing apparatus on the basis of said device identification information and said usage conditions; and

fourth reception control means for controlling the reception of said content from said second information providing apparatus; and

said second information providing apparatus comprising:

fifth reception control means for controlling the reception of said request for purchasing said content from said first information providing apparatus;

fourth transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for purchasing said content the transmission of said device identification information and said usage conditions to said first information providing apparatus;

sixth reception control means for controlling the reception of a request for said content from said information processing apparatus; and

fifth transmission control means for controlling in response to said request for said content the transmission of said content to said information processing apparatus.

68. An information providing apparatus comprising:

transmission control means for controlling the transmission of a content in response to a request from an information processing apparatus;

reception control means for controlling, when said content has been transmitted, the reception, sent from said information processing apparatus, of information for identifying a transmission destination of said content; and

storage control means for controlling the storing of said information for identifying said transmission destination of said content in correspondence with data for identifying said content.

69. The information providing apparatus according to claim 68, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content and said reception control means controls the reception of said information for identifying a destination to which said content is checked out.

70. The information providing apparatus according to claim 68, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of said content to said information processing apparatus and said reception control means controls the reception of said information for identifying said transmission destination of said content indicative of said information processing apparatus.

71. The information providing apparatus according

to claim 68, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content and said reception control means controls the reception of said information for identifying said destination to which said content is checked out.

72. The information providing apparatus according to claim 68, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of said content to a storage medium detachably loaded in said information processing apparatus and said reception control means controls the reception of said information for identifying the transmission destination of said content, said information being indicative of said storage medium.

73. The information providing apparatus according to claim 72, wherein said transmission control means controls the transmission of said content as checking out of said content and said reception control means controls the reception of said information for identifying a check-out destination of said content, said information being indicative of said storage medium.

74. An information providing method comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission of a content in response to a request from an information processing

apparatus;

controlling, when said content has been transmitted, the reception, from said information processing apparatus, of information for identifying a transmission destination of said content; and

controlling the storing of said information for identifying said transmission destination of said content in correspondence with data for identifying said content.

75. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission of a content in response to a request from an information processing apparatus;

controlling, when said content has been transmitted, the reception, from said information processing apparatus, of information for identifying a transmission destination of said content; and

controlling the storing of said information for identifying said transmission destination of said content in correspondence with data for identifying said content.

76. A program for instructing a computer to execute the steps of:

controlling the transmission of a content in response to a request from an information processing

apparatus;

controlling, when said content has been transmitted, the reception, from said information processing apparatus, of information for identifying a transmission destination of said content; and

controlling the storing of said information for identifying said transmission destination of said content in correspondence with data for identifying said content.

77. An information processing apparatus comprising:

first transmission control means for controlling the transmission of a request for a content to an information providing apparatus;

reception control means for controlling the reception of said content; and

second transmission control means for controlling, when said content has been received, the transmission, to said information providing apparatus, of information for identifying a transmission destination of said content.

78. The information processing apparatus according to claim 77, said second transmission control means the transmission of said information for identifying said transmission destination of said content, said information being indicative of said information

controlling the reception of said content; and
controlling, when said content has been received,
the transmission, to said information providing apparatus,
of information for identifying a transmission destination
of said content.

83. A program storage medium storing a computer-readable program comprising the steps of:

controlling the transmission of a request for a
content to an information providing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content; and

controlling, when said content has been received,
the transmission, to said information providing apparatus,
of information for identifying a transmission destination
of said content.

84. A program for instructing a computer to
execute the steps of:

controlling the transmission of a request for a
content to an information providing apparatus;

controlling the reception of said content; and

controlling, when said content has been received,
the transmission, to said information providing apparatus,
of information for identifying a transmission destination
of said content.